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ABSTRACT

This report examines the efforts of Youth Education for Tomorrow (YET), a best-practices-based literacy program developed by a group of faith-based schools, churches, and community organizations in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania. In each YET Center, a qualified teacher and volunteer assistants helped children improve as readers using proven techniques. Classes were held in neighborhood faith-based settings 4 days a week after school and during the summer. Classes were designed to be fun and engaging, and improvements were measured with periodic tests. Evaluation results indicate that overall, the YET program helped children, but the process of implementing YET was complex and difficult, challenging sites in myriad ways that highlighted the diversity and independence of faith-based institutions. Children who attended YET Centers for 6 months or more gained 1.9 years in reading ability. Those who came fewer than 100 sessions registered an average gain of 1.1 grades. The average elementary student was a third grader entering the program reading at a first grade level and after 4 months reached a second grade level. The average high school youth gained a full grade reading level after 3 months. A list of the October 2001 YET Center locations is appended. (Contains 12 references.) (SM)

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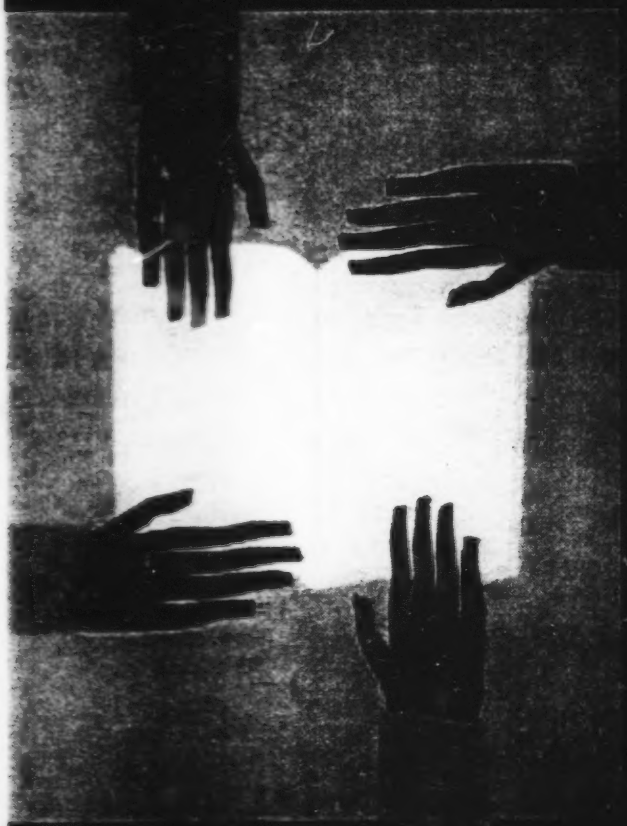

An Analysis of One Year of Literacy Programming in Faith Based Institutions

Bill Hangley Jr.
Wendy S. McClanahan

Foreword by John J. DiIulio Jr.

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Mustering the Armies of Compassion in Philadelphia

An Analysis of One Year of Literacy Programming in Faith-Based Institutions

Bill Hangley, Jr.
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Public/Private Ventures is a national nonprofit organization that seeks to improve the effectiveness of social policies and programs. P/PV designs, tests and studies initiatives that increase supports, skills and opportunities for residents of low-income communities; works with policymakers to see that the lessons and evidence produced are reflected in policy; and provides training, technical assistance and learning opportunities to practitioners based on documented effective practices.

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The Pew Charitable Trusts support nonprofit activities in the areas of culture, education, the environment, health and human services, public policy, and religion. Based in Philadelphia, The Trusts make strategic investments to help organizations and citizens develop practical solutions to difficult problems. In 1998, with approximately $4.734 billion in assets, The Trusts granted more than $213 million to 298 nonprofit organizations.

We also want to thank The Annie E. Casey Foundation and particularly Ralph Smith for their support of the YET Centers.

The YET Center project would not have been possible without Marciene S. Mattleman. Dr. Mattleman developed the model, assembled a top-notch project team and opened 21 YET Centers in record-setting time. The YET Centers are another example of Marciene's successful, career-long commitment to improving the life prospects of Philadelphia's children and youth.

John J. DiIulio, Jr., former P/PV Board member and senior counsel, long ago recognized the potential of faith-based organizations to address some of the most pressing needs in high-poverty inner-city neighborhoods, and saw the leadership role that Philadelphia could play in the national dialogue about faith-based organizations. Dr. DiIulio guided the development of the CSM Initiative, which will test the ability of faith-based organizations to meet these important goals.

In addition to providing thoughtful comments on drafts of this report, P/PV President Gary Walker deserves special recognition for directing P/PV's development of two major demonstration projects in the faith-based field. In addition to the CSM Initiative, P/PV is responsible for the 16-city National Faith-Based Initiative for High-Risk Youth.

Finally, Joseph P. Tierney deserves thanks for guiding the development and analysis of the YET Center project. As the head of P/PV's Greater Philadelphia Initiatives Department, he provided the staff and authors with an open door, thoughtful advice and invaluable support.

P/PV's Leigh Bernstein provided leadership and on-site support to the YET Centers and offered helpful comments on drafts of the report. Jane Hileman, William H. Richards, Tawana Smoke and Erika Wines from the 100 Book Challenge Company significantly contributed to the YET Center program.

P/PV's W. Wilson Goode, Sr. worked with the faith leadership and helped recruit volunteers for the Centers. Lonnie Beer of the Jewish Community Relations Council led the volunteer recruitment effort.

We would also like to thank several other P/PV colleagues who contributed to this report. Sarah Pepper, Shawn Bauldry and Chrissy Labs helped develop and implement the monitoring system that generated the data for the report, and analyzed the data; Patricia Wieland copyedited the document, Carol Kersbergen word-processed and proofread the report, in addition to providing general support for the YET Center initiative; and Maxine Sherman coordinated the report's publication.

Most important, we want to recognize the commitment and contributions of all the faith leadership, staff and volunteers at the YET Centers. The improvements in reading achievement that we documented in this report would not have occurred without their commitment to the children and neighborhoods in which they live and work. We would like to specifically acknowledge the individuals interviewed for this report. Dr. Robin Foster-Drain, Renee Moore and Erin Williams Oldt of To Our Children's Future With Health; Lonnie Beer and Rabbi Lina Grazier-Zerbarini of the Jewish Community Relations Council; Rev. Mytrice Sermons of Anti-Drug & Alcohol Crusaders; Sister Loretta Felici and Sister Marilynn Chapleskie of St. Thomas Aquinas School; Barbara Moses and Sherrie Cofer of Philadelphia Mennonite High School; Joanne Kaplan and Joyce Andersen of Cooke Middle School; Christina Alexander of Urban Bridges at St. Gabriel's; Sister Eileen Smith and Father Aidan Rooney of St. Vincent's Face to Face; Ellen Ginsberg of the Kearney School; Rev. Kevin Porter and Lorri Greenidge of Calvin Presbyterian Church, Rev. Laverne Adams of Cathedral of Praise; Sister Mary Scullion, Leslie Fredericks and Sister Rose Martin of Project H.O.M.E.; Sister Miriam Scully and Sister Kathleen Klarich of Little Flower High School; Rev. Danny Cortes, Johnny Irizarry, Florence Flores, Erin Rich and Angela Gonzales of Nueva Esperanza Charter School; Sister Dorothy Crowley of Our Lady of Victory; Harriet Hill of Christian Stronghold; Rev. George Bur, Kevin Smith-Fagan and Gwelan Peterson of the Gesu School; Helen Gill and Rev. Jeremiah Gill of the Holy Temple of The Lord and Savior Jesus Christ.

The opinions expressed in this report are those of the authors and do not necessarily reflect the views of The Pew Charitable Trusts or The Annie E. Casey Foundation.

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A Philadelphia Story That All Can Read

Philadelphia's schoolchildren are in a literacy crisis. Nearly half of the city's public schoolchildren do not read at a "basic" level by the end of third grade. Many graduates cannot read well, and some can hardly read at all.

Poor reading, the root of much educational failure, is an almost certain one-way ticket to chronic unemployment or permanent low wages, and factors into drug abuse, violence, incarceration, and many of the other social ills that derail or destroy countless young lives in Philadelphia and across the nation.

A civic need is clear. Can it be met in sacred spaces? What if every Philadelphia schoolchild could find an after-school literacy program in a safe place within walking distance of his or her home? What if that program was based on best-practices research, and run from local religious congregations and community-serving ministries? What if the local faith-based organizations that President George W. Bush counts first among society's "armies of compassion" were mustered to join in a public/private, religious/secular partnership whose goal was to tackle the city's school-age illiteracy crisis?

This report looks at just such an effort. In 2000-2001, a group of faith-based schools, churches and community organizations in Philadelphia was trained to operate an innovative, best-practices-based, literacy program developed by Public/Private Ventures (P/PV). The program was named Youth Education for Tomorrow (YET). In each YET Center, a qualified teacher and volunteer assistants helped children improve as readers using proven techniques. Classes were designed to be fun and engaging, and improvements were carefully measured with periodic tests. Classes were all held in neighborhood faith-based settings, four days a week after school and during the summer.

Did these YET Centers work? Since the Centers opened their doors a brief 18 months ago, almost a thousand children have enrolled. They were on average reading more than two years behind grade level. Sixty percent are in the first to fifth grades; 20 percent are in high school. So we know parents trust their children to these organizations, and that even older youth will come.

The children who have attended a YET Center for six months or more (about 100 sessions) vaulted 1.9 years in reading ability. Those who have come fewer than 100 sessions registered an average gain of "only" 1.1 grades. The average elementary pupil was a third-grader who entered the program reading at a first-grade level and after four months of YET had reached a second-grade level. The average high school youth gained a full grade reading level after three months.

Not all improvements can be attributed to the YET Centers- simple before-and-after comparisons send most social scientists screaming from the room- but we can safely assume that it was not a change in the drinking water, sun spots or other factors that fully account for these successes.

This truly represents sacred places meeting civic needs, but they could not have done it alone. As Senator Hillary Clinton recently noted, sacred places almost always serve civic purposes best when they work through partnerships. The YET program was developed by Dr. Marciene Mattleman, a nationally recognized literacy expert and P/PV's director of literacy initiatives. It was nurtured by local faith-based staff and P/PV staff alike, including former Philadelphia Mayor W. Wilson Goode, P/PV's senior advisor on faith-based issues and director of the Amachi mentoring program for children with parents in prison. It was funded by The Pew Charitable Trusts. YET Centers represent nothing less than an effective partnership in action.

In YET, P/PV has developed what I believe to be a truly model social program, one worth solidifying, testing, expanding and replicating nationwide. Its work lies close to my heart. From 1995 until my service as director of the White House Office of Faith-Based and Community Initiatives in 2001, I served on P/PV's Board of Directors and as non-resident senior counsel for developing faith-based/community partnership initiatives. The most satisfying work of my time at P/PV was to assist with the development of P/PV's Center for Greater Philadelphia Initiatives, which has launched a series of local programs, including the Youth Violence Reduction Partnership, the Amachi mentoring program and the YET Center program. These programs not only provide critical services to young people in need, but they do so in a bipartisan, collaborative manner that stresses measurable results.

Praise for YET's success to date should go first and foremost to the faith-based leaders who have willingly opened their doors to new partners. Without their compassion and good will, YET would never have happened. Kudos are due as well to P/PV's leaders and staff, for thinking and acting outside the box and in the public interest. Finally, The Pew Charitable Trusts deserve the deepest thanks, not just for funding the project, but for doing so in a manner that allows P/PV to mine for and disseminate key lessons about the role of faith-based organizations in meeting critical civic needs.

The report you hold in your hands documents those lessons thoroughly, unsparingly, and even self-critically, but the core finding is this: sacred spaces can serve civic purposes. God bless this city's precious children. May theirs soon be a Philadelphia story that all can read.

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Introduction

Long before taking office, President George W. Bush was drawing attention to the social service potential of the nation's faith-based institutions. Early in his presidential campaign, he suggested they take on a central role in the fight against poverty and distress. Since then, a vigorous public debate has emerged over whether and how to, in the President's words, " rally America's armies of compassion."

Public/Private Ventures (P/PV) has been exploring that very question for several years. In March 2000, we developed a literacy model, known as Youth Education for Tomorrow (YET) Centers, to complement in-school reading instruction. The Centers operate in churches and other faith-based institutions throughout Philadelphia, and receive management assistance from P/PV. This report reviews the experiences and results of our first year of YET Center work.

P/PV launched these literacy programs with two main goals in mind. First, we wanted to provide an effective literacy service to young children. Second, we wanted to find out whether a diverse group of independent faith-based institutions could collectively deliver an effective service. Research from the University of Pennsylvania has definitively proved that faith-based institutions provide a wide variety of services in Philadelphia's poorest communities.[1] But how effective are those contributions? Or, better put, how can those contributions be made as effective as possible? Can these varied and independent institutions be mustered into an " army" that does a specific job on a significant scale?

Our YET Center project suggests that it can be done, but it is worth taking a moment to consider the implications of President Bush's military metaphor. An effective army requires obedient soldiers guided by effective tactics. To muster an army, recruiters must convince individuals to give up some measure of personal freedom in order to serve the larger cause. Soldiers lose a measure of independence, but gain a measure of effectiveness because the military can organize and direct them toward large-scale goals.

P/PV did not, of course, require its YET Center sites to submit to the kind of comprehensive discipline that the military requires. But we did require

them to follow rules and implement a model literacy program devised by our own staff. This model proved effective but also required the host sites to sacrifice a measure of control. They were not wholly in charge of their YET Centers. They agreed to follow P/PV's basic directives in the YET classroom, and to accept our definition of how it should run and what its goals would be.

The result was that all of our sites delivered, with variations, an effective literacy service. The children who consistently attended YET Centers improved as readers, which pleased site staff. At the same time, staff found it difficult to deal with an authority like P/PV importing a classroom model that did not always fit neatly with their own goals or priorities. Like soldiers, they were asked to exchange some independence for effectiveness, which proved a complex bargain that elicited a variety of responses from the participating faith-based institutions.

But why impose the YET model at all? Why did P/PV not allow faith-based institutions to develop their own literacy programs and pedagogical approaches? The answer lies in the history of the project. In its earliest stage, we solicited independent proposals from a variety of faith-based sites, many of which addressed the need to improve children's educational performance. But when reviewing the education proposals, P/PV was faced with two problems:

- Many of the proposals were related to literacy but were far too vaguely designed to ensure clear outcomes. Their shortcomings plainly demonstrated a lack of experience in developing targeted programs intended to produce specific results. They may have been helpful programs in their own right, but many were not geared toward achieving tangible reading improvement.
- The proposals were so diverse as to make comparison impossible. The target populations, program components and outcome goals were all different; some organizations wanted to run new programs, while others wanted to blend literacy into their existing programming. Some had focused ideas, whereas others were broad. And every site proposed a different blend of practical and spiritual goals.

Forced to choose between nurturing sites' individual visions or promoting consistent results across a group of sites, P/PV chose the latter. Our charge was not to find out what churches could or would do on their own, but to find out whether they could collectively deliver demonstrably effective services. We decided to develop a literacy program on our own and ask sites to implement it. By doing so, we would be able to compare their experiences and results.

The YET approach, then, is highly directive and represents only one of many potential approaches to faith-based programming.

In this report, we share our findings on not only the effectiveness of YET Centers, but also on the challenges that arise when one attempts to muster a division of the "army of compassion" and get it to march in formation. Part I examines the YET model itself and its goals. Part II reports the sites' measurable achievements: how many children were recruited and retained, what kind of results they achieved in the classroom, and how well they were able to fulfill the requirements of program participation. Part III relies on interviews with site staff to report on the sites' similarities, differences and overall experience.

Overall, the YET program seems to have helped children, but the process of implementing YET was complex and difficult, challenging sites and P/PV alike in myriad ways that highlight the diversity and independence of faith-based institutions.

Part I:
The YET Center Model

In January 2000, P/PV was awarded a grant (known as the Community-Serving Ministries grant) by The Pew Charitable Trusts with which to explore the capacity and potential of Philadelphia's faith-based institutions. We chose several areas of focus, including literacy for children, mentoring and child-care services. Literacy was the first program we launched, and YET Centers were the result. Initially, literacy was chosen for several reasons:

- Everyone agrees that it is necessary. Many young people in poor communities need a literacy boost, and reading and homework-help programs are among the most common in faith-based institutions.[2]
- Teaching literacy is relatively straightforward. A quality reading program can be simple, relatively inexpensive and effective, and need not require extensive training or resources.
- The results come both quickly and clearly. In a matter of months, a good reading program can demonstrably reward the efforts of young readers and program staff.
- Reading can be reliably and effectively measured. Testing young readers for progress is fairly simple, giving both P/PV and program staff a concrete measure of their effectiveness.

The YET Center Model

With these points in mind, P/PV developed a YET Center model through which we believed that any site of any faith, big or small, rich or poor, could successfully teach children to read. In this model, sites provide the space, the children and the volunteers, and handle the paperwork, while P/PV provides the funding, the pedagogy and the training for all involved staff.

This highly motivational program, whose components are secular and research-based,[3] encourages children to participate in class, and to understand the connection between reading, speaking, writing and the events of the world around them. The model was to function in the following ways:

- Classes are held after school for 90 minutes, four days a week, throughout the school year (or the summer, for summer programs).[4]

- Students and a teacher engage in four basic activities in each class: an oral language/vocabulary activity (talking about words and ideas in the context of current events, holidays, issues in the news, or other things of interest to students); the teacher reading aloud to students (so students hear what good reading sounds like); student reading; and writing (so they learn that writing is no more than "thinking on paper").
- The target population is children three years or less behind their grade level, and the goal is to bring them up to grade level. The YET Center model is not a clinical program and is not intended to diagnose specific problems, serve children with severe reading deficiencies, or provide specific instruction in areas like grammar, letter recognition or the English language. It is not designed for those who already read at grade level, and while such children can certainly benefit from the program, P/PV asked sites to restrict their recruitment to children three years or less behind.
- Teachers must be professionally qualified and are paid out of the sites' YET Center budgets. They are to be approved by P/PV and assisted by unpaid volunteers brought in by the sites.
- Volunteers (recruited by sites and trained by P/PV) are to assist teachers, listen to children read, read aloud to them and help in other program areas.
- Classroom reading materials are to be supplemented by take-home materials. Children at the elementary level use The 100 Book Challenge[3],[5] reading books of increasing levels of difficulty at their independent reading levels. Students are coached by teachers and volunteers using strategies that make clear what they are expected to do at each skill level. Sites teaching older children use age-appropriate books and reading materials that focus on current events.
- Children are tested for reading levels at entry, midway through the year and at the end of the year. Each student is tested individually using a standardized instrument called an Informal Reading Inventory (IRI),[6] which provides teachers with students' independent reading levels.

- Class time is not used for the purposes of religious instruction. YET Centers are meant to be as "faith-neutral" as possible. While not asked to eliminate all evidence of their faith, sites are asked, for example, not to pray or worship in class, and to rely on secular reading materials.

In addition to these basics, P/PV's model requires a host of "essentials" that include a clearly posted daily schedule, displays of student work, and a "word wall" on which students can see high-frequency words. YET sites are also asked to make sure their students have library cards and access to books in class. Finally, YET sites are required to assist P/PV's efforts to gather data on children and their families, through interviews with students' parents and teachers.

The Sites

Between June and October 2000, P/PV launched YET Centers in 21 different faith-based institutions. Of the sites that went through the implementation process, only one dropped out, primarily because of internal organizational difficulties. Those that remain differ by size, capacity, religious missions, social missions, structure, stability, funding and style.

The 21 YET Center hosts include five Catholic sites, four of which are Catholic schools. Another is a community-based organization run by a Catholic nun. Seven sites are Protestant, including the Presbyterian, Baptist, Mennonite and Methodist denominations. Of these, one is a school; another is a community-service organization run, until recently, out of its leader's home; and several are churches, including a small church based in a former storefront and a pair of churches that offer other youth-related services. Two sites are run out of public schools in partnership with faith-based organizations, one of which is Jewish, another of which is Episcopalian. One is in a charter school established by a Hispanic clergy association.[7]

These sites, for the most part, planned to serve between 15 and 30 children, although a few sites (all schools) aimed for 40 or more, and one aimed to serve 75.

Almost all planned to teach children who were selected, at least in part, from the larger group that already patronized the institutions (whether as congregants, students, or participants in other programs). Two sites had not previously offered after-school programming and used the YET Centers to reach out to children that had never been involved with the site. A third site, based in a school, used the YET program to serve some students from the school along with others from outside the school. But most sites already had some kind of programming for children and drew YET students from the same sources that filled other programs.[8] While almost all the sites ran the YET Center as an after-school program, four school-based sites integrated some or all of their YET classes into their school days.

Part II:
YET Centers by the Numbers—The Four Rs

The effectiveness of YET Centers can be measured using four basic categories of data: recruitment, retention, requirements and results.[9] These categories show whether sites were able to find children for the YET program, keep them attending consistently, implement the required YET model, and obtain and record reading improvements among students.

These data must be presented with an important caveat: we can measure the improvement of the young readers who attended the program, but because this research does not include comparison or control groups, we cannot say for sure that YET alone was responsible for that improvement. Influences at home and at school affect the lives of YET students.

Given that, we can say the following about the YET experiment:

- Sites were able to recruit significant numbers of students. All but five sites met or exceeded their recruitment goals.
- Retention was far more uneven. Sites' ability to retain students varied widely, with some sites showing more than three-quarters of their students attending 60 classes or more, and others less than a quarter. Overall, less than half the students recruited attended 60 classes or more (enough classes for us to expect a significant impact on reading).
- With P/PV's active assistance, every site was able to implement the basics of the YET Center model, and the data suggest that the more effectively sites implemented the model, the more their students improved. However, sites' ability to implement the program consistently and in detail varied, with each site displaying different strengths and weaknesses in different areas of the program.
- Students who consistently attended YET usually improved as readers. Among those that attended long enough to be tested twice, elementary school children averaged a gain of more than a grade level between their first and second tests (at least 90 days apart); older students averaged a gain of more than 1.5 grade levels.

Performance and results varied from site to site. These variations will be explored below as the "four Rs" are discussed in detail.

Recruitment: Who Came?

From the outset, YET sites set recruitment goals for themselves, ranging from 14 to 75 children, with most aiming for about 30. All but five centers met their initial enrollment goals,[10] and many exceeded their goals by wide margins. School-based sites set the highest goals, and sometimes did not reach them but, nonetheless, ultimately enrolled the most youth (38 on average). Community centers and church-based sites set lower initial goals but were also able to recruit more than 30 children each, on average.

In the summer and school year of 2000-2001, the YET program was able to enroll a total of about 855 youth (786 during the school year, 190 in the summer of 2000, of which 69 continued on into the school year) through seven summer and 23 school-year programs.[11]

Demographics. Intake data on YET students show that 80 percent were African American and 7 percent were Hispanic; the rest were Caucasian or "other." Most were living at or below poverty level (75% of those in school received free or reduced-price school lunch). YET Centers served more females than males (57% to 43%, respectively). Sixty percent of all YET students were in grades one to five, 10 percent in grades six to eight, and 21 percent in high school. Additionally, one program served out-of-school students, while another served preschool youth.

Relationship to the Site. About half of the sites drew recruits from students or congregants that were already closely involved with the site, and would have remained so even if the YET Center had not been available (e.g., a school offers the program as an after-school option for students). In most other cases, the YET Center allowed sites that already served some children to increase the "slots" available (e.g., a church increases its after-school roster from 30 to 50). In two cases, the program allowed sites to run an after-school program and thus attract children for the first time.

Reading Ability. Elementary school children came to the Centers reading, on average, 1.7 years behind their grade level. Older students averaged almost four years (3.8) behind grade level. It appears that sites serving young children found plenty of recruits that fit the eligibility guidelines

(children three years or less behind grade level). However, as older children can fall much farther behind, sites serving them found that the three-year window was too small.

But despite any reading deficiencies, most YET students came into the program saying that they liked reading. While 68 percent said that reading was at least "a little" hard for them, more than one-third (37%) liked reading "a lot," and another third (32%) liked it "some." Furthermore, most came from moderately rich reading environments: two-thirds (64%) had a library card when they entered the program, a quarter (25%) reported being read to "a couple of times" a week at home, and a third (34%) said that they were read to every day.[12] Only 16 percent said that they never read for fun, and only 7 percent did not like reading at all. Most of their parents have had some educational success: 71 percent were high school graduates, just over half of whom had some post-high-school training or education.

School Experience. Participants' school experiences were mixed when they entered the program.[13] They arrived with average grades of B-minuses to Cs, and only 2 percent were in special education. But some behavioral problems were evident: during the four weeks before starting YET, one-eighth of YET students had been sent to the school principal for disciplinary action, one-tenth had been suspended, and almost half had come late to school. One in 10 (9%) were identified by their teachers as having moderate to severe behavioral problems. Nonetheless, on a scale of 0 (poor behavior) to 4 (good behavior), 78 percent of YET students were rated by their regular school teachers as a 3 or 4.

Retention: Did They Keep Coming?

Retention, unsurprisingly, proved more difficult than recruitment. Out of 786 participants from school year 2000-2001, 7 percent never came to class, and 22 percent came no more than 20 times. The biggest group came between 21 and 100 times (42%), and another 30 percent came 101 times or more.[14] Measured another way, just under half of YET's recruits (47%) attended enough classes (60) for us to expect the program to have a positive impact on their reading ability.

Retention Site by Site. Retention numbers differed from one site to another. Six sites had over three-quarters of their students attend more than 60 classes. At another six sites, between 50 and 75 percent of the students came 60 times or more. Four had less than half of their students come 60 times, and another four had less than a quarter come that often.

Retention problems were reflected in testing. Sites were asked to test children once on entry and a second time, at least 90 days later, for improvement. In school year 2000-2001, sites gave initial tests to 684 of all 786 recruits, but only 392 children were tested twice- almost exactly half of the recruits. Among the 19 Centers for which complete data were available, six gave two tests to more than two-thirds of their recruits, nine gave two tests to between one-third and two-thirds, and four gave two tests to a third or less.

Factors of Success. School-based sites were generally the most successful at retaining students, no doubt because of the fact that they ran their YET programs either during or immediately following the school day. Of the six sites that got more than 75 percent of YET students to come to 60 classes, four were Catholic schools, one was a Protestant school and one was a church-based community center.

However, not every school performed that well. Other schools (including Catholic, Protestant, public and charter) reported that anywhere from 14 to 68 percent of their students attended YET sessions at least 60 times. And not every site that did well was a school; some community- or church-based programs drew over 50 percent more than 60 times. For more on these factors of success, see Part III: Program Implementation and Effectiveness.

Requirements: Could Sites Implement the Program?

YET sites had to address two groups of requirements: implementation of the model, and recording and reporting data. In both cases, P/PV staff were actively engaged at all times, making it impossible to say what sites would have done if left entirely on their own.

Program Implementation. Most sites were able to handle the program's basic requirements: scheduling the time (four 90-minute sessions weekly), setting aside space, finding a qualified teacher and sending staff to the required training sessions. P/PV staff actively assisted in many cases; example, they helped sites find teachers and through frequent site visits monitored their adherence to the basic YET model. At the same time, implementation of the program's many details (e.g., the "word wall," posted schedules, proper display of materials) was more uneven.

While quantifying "adherence to the model" is difficult, P/PV staff rated the quality of program implementation based on site visits. Each site was assigned a score from 1 (poor) to 5 (outstanding) in each of four categories (oral language, writing, reading and overall consistency), with a maximum score of 20. The resulting numbers were diverse: six scored 15 points or more, nine scored between 9 and 14, and four scored 8 or lower (out of 19 reviewed). As with retention, all but one of the six best implementation performers were schools- four Catholic schools and a Protestant charter school. The poorest implementers included most of the sites that showed the poorest retention numbers. For more, see Part III: Program Implementation and Effectiveness.

Paperwork and Data Collection. Paperwork proved a challenge, and with the active help of P/PV staff, sites provided enrollment information for slightly less than two-thirds (65%) of school-year participants. Only 14 sites provided complete attendance information. Record-keeping and paperwork are a known challenge for many small or faith-based institutions,[15] and the YET experience certainly bore this out. At the same time, sites found getting data from parents and teachers difficult even with the best of efforts.

Results: Did Students Improve?

Available data show that many students who attended YET programs improved as readers.[16] Overall, participants improved an average of 1.4 grade levels between their first and second IRI tests (at least 90 days apart); 44 percent of all those who took two tests averaged over a grade level of improvement. Students who attended more averaged greater gains: those whose two tests were more than 180 days apart averaged approximately

1.5 grade levels. Controlling for length of participation, we can expect about two levels of reading growth for students who participate for an entire academic year.

Results were somewhat different for younger versus older YET Center participants.

Elementary School Children. When looking at the elementary school children (grades 1 to 6) served by 14 programs, those tested were, on average, in grade 2.7.[17] They arrived reading, on average, 1.7 levels below the proper level. After 90 days, they were re-tested and read 0.5 grade levels below the proper level, for an improvement of 1.2 grade levels. This means that the average elementary student's deficiency was reduced by 70 percent. In other words, the average elementary YET student was a third-grader who arrived reading only a little better than a first-grader should, who advanced well into the second-grade level after at least 90 calendar days, or approximately 60 classes.

Older School Children. The older children (grades 6 to 12) served by five programs[18] arrived while in, on average, grade 9, reading 3.9 grade levels below where they should have been. When tested a second time, these students tested at 2.2 grade levels below where they should have been, for an average improvement of 1.6 grade levels. These students reduced their deficiency by an average of 58 percent. In other words, the average older student was a ninth-grader who arrived reading at a fifth-grade level, and who advanced to between sixth- and seventh-grade levels after at least 90 calendar days.

Site-to-Site Variations. Both initial deficiencies and improvements varied from site to site. Among 14 sites serving young children, only two started with students averaging less than a year behind grade level. Four others started with children averaging between one and two years behind, and eight started with children averaging more than two years behind grade level. The five sites serving older children reported that their students averaged 2.6 to 4.9 years behind grade level.

Where improvement was concerned, sites serving young children reported gains ranging from less than one grade level (four sites) to almost two grade levels (two sites). The rest averaged between one and two grade levels. Sites serving older children reported improvements ranging from less than one (one site) to three grade levels (one site).

Factors of Success. The most notable factors of success for YET students were student attendance and the effectiveness of site implementation. The more a student attended, the more they improved.[19] Centers with average participant attendance of over 100 days (not including participants that never attended) had participants with larger reading gains (1.9 grade levels on average), whereas those with average attendance of less than 100 days registered an average gain of only 1.1 grade levels. The effect of Center attendance remained important even after such individual participant characteristics as race, gender, age and low-income status were considered.

It appears that the more effectively the sites implemented the YET program, the better the students did. We found that the eight centers that scored 14 or more on P/PV's implementation rating (see above) had reading gains of 1.6 grades on average, whereas the 10 Centers that scored 13 or less averaged 1.2 grades of growth. (Note that this does not necessarily reflect badly on the latter sites' effort; many high-rated YET Centers are in schools or well-established institutions that have advantages in staffing or experience.)

For more, see Part III: Program Implementation and Effectiveness.

Part III:
In Their Words— Evidence from Site and Staff Interviews

Implementing YET Centers consistently was neither simple nor easy, and the fact that many site staffers referred to P/PV staff as "drill sergeants" was no accident. The data in Part II show that not only did this division of the "army of compassion" march in some formation but also that it was hardly a "lock-step" advance. P/PV's efforts to have every Center implement the same model highlighted their many differences.

At the same time, they all firmly supported the idea of a focused literacy effort. Most of the concerns they raised about the P/PV plan were not about what to do, but about how to do it. In the section that follows, an analysis of dozens of interviews with site staff and organizers will explore the sites' complex response to the YET Center experience.

Staff from the YET sites liked many elements of the program itself. The focus on literacy made sense to them, and the YET Centers enabled many to provide a new level of service very much in keeping with their basic goals as institutions. They found testing and measuring for outcomes difficult but liked having clear evidence of their own effectiveness. They recognized that rigor and structure could lead to results they could be proud of, and they generally found that YET offered their institutions an important new tool in the fight to improve their communities.

Site reports concerning the children's experience were overwhelmingly positive. Not only did children generally like the YET program and benefit visibly as readers, but many sites also reported that students also gained self-confidence and discipline. Most sites had success stories involving particular children who had turned important cognitive corners in a short time.

Nonetheless, many aspects of the program frustrated them. The YET model did not exactly fit anywhere, challenging sites to juggle their schedules, rearrange their spaces, find new teachers or reorganize their after-school setups. Many sites found it difficult to put aside their institutional priorities in favor of the model's. Communication and collaboration between site staff, P/PV staff, teachers and organizers was difficult and complex, requiring careful diplomacy. Many sites found their staff stressed by the work of implementing the model, recruiting volunteers, retaining children and reporting data.

None of that was surprising. It is always a challenge to import a new program into an independent organization and P/PV has, in the past, encountered similar issues when running demonstration programs in secular sites. However, YET's faith-based sites did raise some less familiar concerns. P/PV's restrictions on the expression of faith in the YET Centers confused and sometimes grated on them. Our restrictions on program eligibility clashed with their desire to build and maintain relationships with the children they serve, regardless of their test scores or age group. Their pre-existing practices and pedagogies can be deeply entwined with their spiritual mission, and an outsider seeking to modify those practices treads on sensitive ground.

P/PV's experience shows that faith-based institutions are far too varied for us to make any blanket statements about what "they" can or cannot do. At the same time, our YET work suggests that it is possible to work with them to make significant contributions to their communities. In the pages that follow, we will explore some of our findings concerning sites, their staff, their volunteers, their willingness to work with outside models and standards, their experience with implementation and the role of their faith.

Sites and Staff

When thinking about faith-based institutions, two words are critical: diversity and independence. "I think you need to take your time, and not make the assumption that all these faith-based associations are the same," said one of our partners. "I think [people] do that a lot, and it's not fair to them [the institutions]."

The sites that host YET Centers do share some basic elements, such as physical space and a basic fiscal capacity. More important, they share a mission of service. "I think the common denominator is wanting people to be their best selves, no matter where they are, no matter what religion they are," said one site staffer. "That's the common denominator of all the faiths." YET site staff unanimously consider the children they serve to be "at risk" in some fashion, and they all want to reduce that risk, whether through literacy improvement or other means.

The other major unifying factor of YET sites is that they are all located in the hearts of some of Philadelphia's poorest communities and enjoy some benefits because of that, from a social service point of view. One site staffer put it this way:

> A lot of good things have happened in urban neighborhoods, in rural neighborhoods, in otherwise sort of forgotten territories, as a result of religious organizations. I don't think it's because religious organizations are inherently better than other organizations; I think it's because religious organizations are working in places that other organizations are not. In many cases, churches have stayed. If you have a church that has done a lot of work in a community, runs a food pantry, helps people with emergency food or rent, ministers emotionally to people in the community, well yeah, then they've got something that will help them in their programming. People will come in, because people trust them...but that doesn't mean that every religious organization has that kind of respect in the community.

In this sense, the "compassion" of faith-based staff is an asset. In many cases, their spiritual mission has kept them present in communities in which others have departed or collapsed. "I think motivationally [we're] different," said one YET staffer. "Whether you're Jewish or Christian or whatever, there is kind of a spiritual dimension, a relationship to God that is made active and concrete [through service]...they're not in it for the money." This sense of mission was felt acutely by all the sites with which we worked, regardless of their size or denomination. One administrator's words were representative: "For most of [our children], it's do or die. This is really our last chance before they hit the streets."

There are, however, a number of practical and spiritual variables. The faith-based institutions that house YET Centers include churches, social service organizations and schools. Some are large and well known to local funders. Others are small and dependent on their local communities. Some are overtly religious. Others are non-denominational. Some are dedicated to community improvement or social justice. Others promote a particular religious vision. Some routinely run programs and seek to build on their

strengths. Others are looking to branch out beyond whatever role they have played in their communities thus far.

These variations reflect not only the many faces of faith but also the sites' varied relationships with funders and external systems. Some get public funding or foundation grants for specific programs. Some collaborate within their denomination or with other partners on projects large and small. Some rely on their immediate communities or on congregational support. They all have different experiences with fiscal matters, administration, hiring and firing staff, developing specific job profiles, and evaluating performance based on outcomes.

So while all YET sites want to help, each one has its own history and blueprint for how to help. Some sites, like Catholic schools, have a long-standing pedagogical tradition. Others have developed their own goals and methodologies. Some sites have well-defined curricula, while others seek mainly to provide safe havens for children. Some sites teach Microsoft Word, some teach the word of God, and some teach both.

All of these differences are reflected in site staff, who are every bit as varied as the sites themselves. Staffers may be well-paid professionals, drawn from the same workforce that staffs secular organizations, or they may be drawn from congregations, paid on a shoestring if at all. They may be responsible for specific tasks or work with only the vaguest of job descriptions. They may embrace the site's religious mission or consider their work secular. They may have worked in many situations and collaborated with many institutions, or rarely have left the confines of their particular site. Some work in clear hierarchies. Others enjoy varying degrees of independence within their organization. It all depends on the institution itself.

Given all this, it should not be surprising that P/PV struggled to find training and communication methods that suited every site, or that sites had a variety of problems with the YET model itself. "Every day, it's something different," explained one P/PV staffer. "You just never know what the next problem is going to be." P/PV learned very quickly that no one-size-fits-all model would work with the entire group.

Working Toward a Specific Outcome

Our YET Center work clearly showed that faith-based sites are not inherently opposed to running structured programs developed to meet specific goals. This finding was made particularly clear in the case of literacy, where the measure of success is clear. " You can't have loose edges about [literacy]," said one program administrator. " It has to be done in a certain way. It's measurable, and that works to everybody's benefit."

Throughout our YET sites, staff embraced the basic notion that a proven, structured curriculum could help maximize progress and that testing children is a good way to measure that progress. This was seen as a way to not only help the children but also the institutions themselves. One faith leader put it this way, " One of the myths that faith-based institutions have labored under is the non-necessity of finding out if they're actually helping. It wouldn't be unreasonable to show results...that's a great move forward." Or, as one teacher bluntly put it, " The tests are good. They're a pain to do, but it was gratifying to see the progress. It's good to see that the kids are moving."

In addition, literacy seems to have been a particularly good fit because the children's progress as readers quickly translated into progress in other areas. Within a few months of the YET program's launch, virtually every site could point to specific students for whom the focus on literacy resulted not only in improved reading but also in improved social skills, self-esteem, classroom behavior, focus and confidence. One teacher's comment was typical:

> We see progress. We see kids enjoying it. It brings me great joy to see the kids coming in and saying, "I've advanced to this level, look at my cards." You see their faces light up, and you see their self-esteem climb up the ladder, and you see their confidence rising. You see that they're no longer afraid to express themselves. They're working with their peers, and the older students are working with the younger students; they're helping each other.

This attitude is very much in keeping with the overall goal of most faith-based sites, which is not just to teach specific skills but to also help their children do better in every aspect of life. " A parent came up to me when I

was testing her son and said her son wasn't happy about being in the program, would not pick up a book," said one teacher. " But over the Christmas holiday, she said she could not get him to stop reading. He feels better about himself. I notice a difference just in the way he walks into a room...there are all these things that people see and want to nurture."

Site staff almost unanimously agreed that work toward the specific outcome of literacy helped them advance the general outcome they consider important: an overall improvement in the life, health and prospects of the children they serve.

Working With an Outside Model

Working toward the specific goal of literacy raised few problems, but when P/PV tried to import a strictly defined program model, we came into direct conflict with the independent natures of the institutions themselves. All of them agree that literacy is good and that a literacy program should be measured for effectiveness. But conditions vary from site to site, and each site wanted to tailor our model to fit their particular set of variables.

This does not mean they rejected structure or rigor. " It has to be structured," said one pastor. " I will not tolerate a babysitting program." Many said that the children in their care cry out for structure. At the same time, they believe that finding a single structure or model that fits every site's needs will always be difficult. In one teacher's words:

> What a lot of the kids in this neighborhood need is discipline. They don't need more freedom. In fact, a lot of them have too much freedom because nobody's paying attention to them. Some of them do need and crave some order in their lives. [But] I'm somewhat skeptical of replication projects in general. Even within [our collaborative], what works at one site may not work at another because conditions can vary so much from site to site. And they vary widely at any given point from time to time.

While it is debatable whether sites really need flexibility to run a successful model, it is undeniable that they want this flexibility. Almost without

exception, site staff interviewed for this report requested " more flexibility" on one or another element of the basic YET model. " What I would like to see would be a little bit more flexibility," said one. " I think to have a model that can be replicated in all sorts of places, it needs to have some flexibility in it," said another. " We're really dismayed at [YET's] inflexibility," said a third. Another leader said:

> I question the insistence on the minute details being absolutely replicated in every place. I think there's energy being lost in even attempting to do that. I don't know if I should be as blunt as this, but people, I think, look upon you as the "P/PV Police."

Most YET sites have practices and priorities that were well established long before P/PV came on the scene, and when YET came into conflict with these, sparks flew. One site staffer, the head of an established church, told us:

> I think we're being treated as if we're part of the corporation. I'm not part of your corporation, and you're not my boss. I report to a higher authority...our process is totally different. I don't appreciate being made to feel totally incompetent because I can't meet your goals and your standards and do it your way. I could probably do it a lot quicker if I do it my way...You don't have to tell me how to set up my room or what I need to put in my room or my building or my program. You came and asked me to do this program in my—MY—church. This is not your property. That means that I'm going to decide where and when it's going to happen.

But while sites all wanted more flexibility, they differed on exactly what and why. Some wanted broader eligibility rules for children because they want to create or support " community." Some wanted more grammar or comprehension in the pedagogy because they want, as one teacher put it, " to be free to teach when we see a need." Some resisted testing because they want to make children feel like individuals, not test subjects. Some disliked the interactive YET classroom because they value an ordered and traditional classroom setting. Some were uncomfortable with restrictions on the expression of religion because they want their students to understand and embrace their faith.

Thus, the sites did not want to refine the model just to make it more convenient for them. They wanted it to better reflect the priorities they considered central to their institutions.

When asked how to resolve this problem, sites usually suggested that they be given outcomes to measure, targets to hit and a basic structure to work within, and then be allowed to "tailor" the program to address these needs and their own needs. "Part of what I think is the problem is that there isn't a site-based survey of the needs of the staffs, and a tailoring of the program to meet those needs," said one site leader. And she was absolutely correct: P/PV did not attempt to create a different program model for each site. That, however, was what sites wanted. In one site leader's words:

> If you want to fund me just based on outcomes, I've got no problem with that. If you say to me, here are four categories of benchmarks, and those things have to be addressed...I can get people around the table and we can talk about how we address that deficiency in a way that benefits our population, and we can put on paper for you what our program is...That I think, ultimately, is what we want. [But] what we're being told is, "You don't know, and my program's going to tell you how to do it." We're supposed to have blind faith in it. Ultimately, the box never fits the people, and that's the problem with boxes, and you always have to argue about boxes. I didn't sign up for boxes. I signed up for after-school programming with literacy centers...the prescription came later on.

This was a strong, but not atypical, response to the question of the model's appropriateness. The clear message from site staff was that they did not have a problem being held accountable for results or being asked to work within specific guidelines. The more specific P/PV's demands, however, the more difficult consistent implementation was. Sites accepted structure if they felt it balanced our needs with theirs, but they bridled whenever they felt forced to place the model's needs over the immediate needs of their staff or students. "The prescriptive nature of [YET], the minutely prescriptive nature, feels disrespectful to me," said one staffer. "And as that forces us to be in any way disrespectful to the people we serve, then that's a conflict."

Program Implementation and Effectiveness

Instead of asking whether faith-based sites "do it better" than other kinds of sites, our goal was to find out whether they could "do it" at all. In the case of the YET Center, "doing it" required that sites execute a series of specific tasks: prepare staff and space for the program, recruit children, test and teach them according to the YET model's guidelines, and manage to have the children attend the program on a regular basis.

What our first-year data suggest is that sites that implemented the program effectively got good results. This suggests, in turn, that faith-based sites working with a good program model can make demonstrably positive contributions to their communities.

At the same time, we are not able to make any blanket statements about faith-based sites' inherent ability to run programs or to be effective. Our main finding was more basic and perhaps more telling: while all sites achieved a baseline of implementation, some sites ultimately proved more effective than others.

As noted in Part II, effectiveness depended on two main factors: actual program implementation and student attendance (i.e., retention). What the data suggest is that sites that put the model in place and retained students tended to be most effective overall, offering the best possible service to the most students. Sites that implemented well tended to measure larger overall gains than sites whose implementation was less than ideal. Sites that retained well offered more children the chance to benefit from the implementation.

In fact, it can be thought of as a simple formula: implementation plus student retention equals effectiveness. Both have value on their own, but together they complement each other.

Performance on both counts was influenced by different factors. Where implementation of the classroom model itself was concerned, the most critical factor was the teacher. As long as the teacher understood and embraced the YET model, the four-component classroom strategy and testing usually fell into place.[20] Implementation of YET's details (e.g., properly sized desks

and chairs, sufficient books, appropriate space and schedule) often depended on the collaboration among site staff and YET staff, and thus was affected by many factors, but if the teacher knew what to teach and was willing to teach it, the basic program components were implemented.

A larger number of factors seemed to affect attendance. Some factors are internal, like the consistency of the site's scheduling and after-school routine, the efficiency of its administration, and its experience with other programming. Other factors are beyond sites' control, like their physical proximity to the YET students' schools or the safety of their neighborhoods. For example, several sites noted that after-school attendance sometimes drops in the winter months simply because children or their families do not think traveling home in the dark is safe.

What the data do not tell us is how to predict what sorts of sites will do well or why. Does the YET experience thus far suggest that certain kinds of faith-based institutions are more effective than others? In a word, no. Big sites did not perform categorically better than small sites; school-based sites did not perform categorically better than community centers; overtly religious sites did not perform categorically better than non-denominational or less religious sites. Neither faith nor size nor location proved the determining factor for whether a site would achieve the attendance and implementation numbers that led to maximum YET Center success.

But the data do suggest some advantages. For example, schools seem to have better attendance and thus tended to have better overall results. But not every school performed as well on these counts, and not every one of the best performers was a school.

To further complicate matters, comparing the sites is hard because they start from so many different points along the learning curve. It is difficult, for example, to criticize a small, neighborhood-based community center for failing to retain children or report data as effectively as an established, fully

staffed school. Some sites may have performed poorly when compared with others, but they did learn a great deal or improve services previously offered.

One factor was consistent, however, throughout the group of sites: implementation of the YET model required a highly directive and interactive relationship between P/PV and site staff. Extensive supervision would not have been necessary had we allowed sites more self-determination in their program operation. But because our goal was to get all the sites to deliver the same program, we had to actively engineer consistent implementation, which brought P/PV face to face with the varied and sometimes sensitive internal workings of each site.[21]

Each site had to be dealt with slightly differently. Some were organized more or less hierarchically, and P/PV could count on supervisors communicating down the line to other site staff. Sometimes, this was not the case. "There are some pastors and ministers who aren't in control at all," said one organizer. "You think that they are, and you're talking to this pastor and he's sitting there and nodding and agreeing with you, and nothing gets done." Some sites were used to dealing with outsiders' guidelines, but others were sensitive to incursions on their turf.

Furthermore, the dynamics within sites sometimes involved sensitive questions of race and class. One site administrator, relatively new in her position, told this story:

> There are a couple of personnel here whom I'm having a terrible time with, who came here before I did. There are difficult issues with communities. Some people belong to this community. I'm an outsider and will always be. There are delicate issues, a lot of power issues...all these white women [like herself] who have all the answers for the black women [like her staff]. I'm here every day, and I'm beginning to know people and establish relationships that are a bit more sympathetic...but there is a level of antagonism that'll be hard to get past.

Sometimes, P/PV's attempts to solve problems backfired. Early in the school year, we invited site administrators to our offices to discuss the program and any problems they may have had. In the wake of the meeting, a site leader charged P/PV with racial and cultural insensitivity:

> The place I want to start at was one of the meetings that we had at P/PV in the big board room that sat 20 people around this huge table, and they were asked to tell what they thought about the [YET] program. And nobody really said anything. To me, from my perspective, sitting at that table, it was intentionally intimidating...I don't feel safe to tell you what I really think. So I resented that. And then I also resent the fact that all of the people that I saw in leadership were white. I resent that. You don't have to teach me how to teach my kids. I just need the resources to do it.

Later in that interview, interestingly, that leader reflected that the issue was not simply one of race but also one of control. " It was so different," she said of dealing with P/PV's directives. " I don't get treated like that. It's two dynamics, the corporate culture, exclusive of race. And that only exacerbates the racial piece. I don't want to say it's just racial."

Such dramatic conversations were the exception, not the rule, and the above administrator's site has emerged as a strong performer in terms of attendance, implementation and results. Notable, too, is that P/PV learned from that encounter that sites are easier to work with when met on their own turf or group meetings were arranged in places in which things like parking or traffic were not problems. But the bottom line is that the YET collaboration put both P/PV and many site staff in unfamiliar territory, and both sides had to recognize and work through a number of diplomatic conflicts and confusion as the project progressed.

YET Center staff, for their part, recognized and understood the problems P/PV faced. No one is more aware than they of the variable and independent nature of faith-based institutions. Their proposed solution, as with the question of the model itself, was that P/PV tailor its training and staff

development agenda to meet each site's needs. "I would [suggest P/PV] analyze the needs of the church in West Philadelphia versus the needs of [a school] where maybe the people have had some training," said one site leader.

So in the end, P/PV's experience does not allow us to say whether faith-based sites would have been able to effectively implement a literacy program without our YET model. What we do know is that some were more effective with the YET model than others, and that effectiveness did not seem to depend on the site's size or faith or particular location. Instead, it seemed to depend on the site's basic ability to organize itself in pursuit of a specific goal, its ability to draw a consistent group of children and its willingness to accept the YET model's goals as its own. In retrospect, some YET sites clearly did better on those counts than others, but it would have been very difficult to identify which sites would do better beforehand based on any objective criteria.

As a final note, P/PV itself was not always as effective as it could have been, which was also a factor. We learned over time how to improve our communications with sites and site staff, and how to lay out expectations and obligations. Many implementation problems sprang up when P/PV adjusted those expectations without clearly communicating what we were doing. Sites routinely asked for a clear picture of what exactly they had to do, saying that they did not mind working within restrictions, but adding that they wanted the opportunity to "self-select" in or out with, as several interviewees put it, "eyes wide open." Effectiveness ultimately depends on each partner's effectiveness, including P/PV's.

Eligibility Restrictions

Most implementation conflicts concerned either practical issues like scheduling or misunderstandings over what was required. These could usually be solved with good communication and flexibility on both sides, and did not represent fundamental conflicts between P/PV's agenda and that of the host sites. But the question of eligibility proved more intractable, revealing a deeper conflict.

As noted in Part I, P/PV's YET model is designed for " deficient" readers, those who are a few years behind grade level. In theory, neither profoundly challenged students or those who read well should be allowed in the program. But many sites resisted this firmly, and their reason for doing so is simple: they want to build relationships with their children regardless of where they stand pedagogically. Their philosophy is relationship based, not outcome based. Or, put another way, the primary outcome they seek is a relationship, and everyone is eligible for that.

> There is a certain challenge and tension...even if someone is successful in the YET Center, and they have risen to the correct level, the next year, are we supposed to not include them in the after-school programs? The whole idea of the church is to nurture. We want to continue to have 25 kids who are reading below reading level in the YET Center, and yet we don't want to lose the ones who have been successful or the ones who never came in.

The problem this pastor articulated is one that all the sites struggled with in one way or another: what do you do with the children that do not fit? Not all have the option of placing them in other programs in their church, and some sites found it counter-intuitive to sort children. " It's very hard to tell people that you have a literacy program and that their child is too far behind for us to help," explained one staffer. " We're going to turn you away because you can't read? That's really not the 'warm fuzzy' that I want to get from the church."

Another site staffer put it frankly: " If a child is a very good reader...we're not going to say no to them. Because the mission is broader than just literacy. We do have lots of children who are very good students who are still needy in lots of ways." For this site, YET's strict eligibility was a potential deal-breaker: " If you guys say that you're not going to give us money for it, fine."

Given this kind of thinking, it is not surprising that we found almost no instances in which a site turned a child away. Many sites believe that the children in their care need healthy relationships with responsible adults as badly as they need anything, telling us plainly that, given the choice

between addressing the model's needs and what they saw as their children's needs, they would choose the latter. One staffer put it this way:

> Maybe a kid will come to the program from school, and they'll have seen a drive-by shooting on the way over. The staff are not going to immediately pull out their vocabulary exercises. They're going to talk to the kids, that kid or the group of kids, about what they're feeling or thinking. As far as I'm concerned, that's not only fine, that's what they have to do. That kind of stuff happens all the time. You can put all the great program designs together, but these kids, they're living in the most devastated neighborhoods in the city. Their lives are a mess, and they need someplace where they can let that out. Our program has been one of the places where they've been able to do that, and I think appropriately so. We just have to figure out how to blend that with the structure that the literacy program requires.

In almost every interview, site staff spoke of their desire to "blend" P/PV's methodology with their own. In many cases, staff acknowledged that their usual methods were not suited to getting measurable results in a classroom setting and that YET's rigor helped them. "We need balance. I had all the pieces, but I didn't have a systematic order," said one pastor. "My ministry is a blending ministry. Blending the old and the new."

But while many staff were open to the idea of blending the old with the new, no one wanted to give up the old for the new. A focus on outcomes and progress was welcome, but not at the expense of traditional service. "This is ministry," that pastor continued, when asked why she balked at implementing some of YET's eligibility restrictions. "I'm touching with my love. I'm touching with my peace. We've got something going on here. So why should I abort it for something else?"

The tension over relationships was not confined to eligibility. It sometimes became an issue where P/PV's research was concerned as well. We had a difficult time getting sites to complete the intake interviews and parent

interviews we had asked for, and while this is partially because of the fact that no one likes to do paperwork, it is also because of the fact that parents and students do not welcome tests, and sites can be reluctant to push them:

> It feels very invasive to me. I don't want our programs to be another place where their lives are open to the scrutiny of other people. It's a difficult enough thing for people to come in and say, "I can't read," and they walk in the door and I say, "well, I need your social security number and how many people live in your house." That just pushes a lot of buttons for me.

The fact that almost all sites have signed up for another year of funding suggests that this conflict can be resolved. Sites recognize an urgent need for literacy in their communities, and they recognize the efficacy of YET's approach. At the same time, each appears committed to blending YET's specific demands into the larger framework of their own institutional goals, which virtually all prioritize the process of developing and maintaining relationships.

Volunteers

In our original YET model, volunteers were to play a central role. We hoped that each YET class could rely on a single teacher and that volunteers could read with children and monitor the classes if the teacher was testing a child. While P/PV assumed the responsibility of training volunteers, we hoped that sites would be able to draw volunteers from their congregations, from neighboring schools and churches, or from their communities.

In YET's first year, however, sites with consistent and sizable volunteer contributions were the exception, not the rule. A few sites had steady and dedicated volunteers: these sites tended to develop a relationship with another institution, like a school or partner church, that provided a consistent corps. But most sites reported that committed, consistent volunteers were hard to find, hard to organize and hard to keep.

Most commonly, sites report that most adults in their communities are simply busy; those that do volunteer cannot necessarily be asked to take on another task. "The people who volunteer are the people who always volunteer," said one staffer. "They've got their plates full already." Another staffer, who uses volunteers in a number of programs, put it this way:

> Faith-based programs are driven by volunteers, it's true. But a lot of these volunteers are already committed. You just can't assume that they can put another project on their plate, because they can't and they won't. The volunteer pool is pretty well drained. I go in and empty a room because they see me coming. I'm always asking for something. It's really difficult.

In addition to being hard to recruit, volunteers require supervision and organization that can tax site staff. "Everyone we have besides our reading specialist are community people," said one supervisor. "[Sometimes], they don't show up. Their lives go in different directions, and then you start again, and again and again and again. When you're dealing with volunteers, that's the rule." Other staffers agreed: volunteers take work. "You can spend your whole day managing 10 volunteers," said one.

These sorts of problems are exacerbated by the relatively high demands the YET model places on volunteers. Many site staff reported that volunteers are relatively easy to find for one-shot events, like running a bake sale or sorting donated coats. Finding qualified people to work with children once or twice a week for a year is a different story altogether. One supervisor found himself with several willing volunteers who read and wrote poorly. "Do I want that as a volunteer in the classroom?" he asked. "Are they going to help the problem or hurt the problem? There comes a point where you have to say that it's going to take away more than it's going to add." Furthermore, volunteers cannot necessarily be treated like employees. "[One church] had this volunteer, and had she been my employee, I would've fired her," said one teacher. "She was horrible, but she was a church volunteer and the church knew her and she was one of them...There was no talking to her. There's nothing you can do about that."

When they came, however, volunteers were usually helpful. The sites that succeeded best with volunteers tended to be those that established a relationship with an outside institution that fed them a reliable, committed corps. One of the most successful examples was a school that partnered with college students, who got class credits for their YET participation. "The relationships that our kids are developing with the college kids is the most significant development for us [in our YET Center]," said that site's leader. "It brings our kids to school every day, it helps them to look forward to the afternoon, it has established connections and linkages." Other sites had good experiences with partner schools or churches that could feed them steady streams of prepared volunteers.

In general, it appears that a program like YET that requires consistent, effective volunteer participation also requires systematic recruitment and organization.[22] P/PV will continue to provide training for recruited volunteers, but in addition, we will both step up our volunteer recruitment efforts and add a paid assistant to each site to take on some of the functions that volunteers were expected to handle.

Outcomes and Benefits to the Sites

The outcomes for our YET Center experience are complicated. Most notably, a large number of children have improved as readers. Sites themselves have gained in various ways from the experience, learning about service delivery, outcome measurements, collaborations and work with outside funders. And the communities served gained access to an important service that was not necessarily available previously.

While sites were quick to register their complaints about our model and methodologies, they were equally quick to confirm what the data in Part II suggest: the program helped the children who attended. "One thing that we kept in mind even as we worked through the difficult times: the children really love reading," said one site leader. "They love their books, they can't wait to choose another, to tell you what they're reading about. They take things home, so there's communication there with the parents and the teachers and the students. Those are the good things."

One of P/PV's original ideas was that literacy programs would be relatively easy to promote because the results come quickly and clearly, which was in fact the case. The fact that many YET students' reading ability improved noticeably, sites reported, made the whole process worthwhile. Sites generally agreed that YET was an improvement on what they previously offered, that it expanded the site's understanding of literacy and programming in general, and that the YET experience left them better prepared to solicit funding and design programs in the future. The fact that almost all sites will seek continued YET funding suggests that they see the program as a gain overall.

But at the same time, sites were quick to put these achievements in perspective. Asked to describe the best faith-based institutions could do, one administrator put it this way, " The best-case scenario is, these programs prepare kids to take better advantage of what the schools provide, and what's available on the job market." By that, he meant that his program would not make the schools, the job market or the local environment any better. Sites can help individuals more easily than they can change systems.

This distinction is important, because most sites think their children's main problem is poverty, and not just personal poverty but also that of the entire community. Sites are anxious to address illiteracy and other personal problems, but in most cases, their primary goal is to provide an alternative to the disorder and danger that surrounds their children. One staffer said:

> I just got a call from someone to tell me that there was a big fight in the parking lot, kids were calling each other's mothers' names, their fathers, all of that, its just part of being here. It's part of their experience. But you're handling that. You're handling kids coming in with flea bites all over their bodies, you're handling kids coming in who just want to take a nap, life is happening. And reading kind of loses its priority. Every day, there's something, there's a fire. Every day.

Sites tended to see literacy programming as one more tool with which to fight for a larger outcome: spiritual and practical survival in a difficult, if not actually bedeviled, environment.

Site staff had decidedly mixed feelings about the movement to fund them. More than one person worried that the new attention on " faith-based initiatives" is merely a ploy to fob off urban problems on the last institutions standing: churches. Faith-based funding could be helpful, said one administrator. " But if it's not combined with a coherent strategy for better jobs and education, then I question who it's for." Sites themselves were quick to acknowledge their limitations, whether internal (staff and resource shortages) or external (students living with unstable families or in dangerous neighborhoods). They generally felt that they were only a piece of the puzzle in their community. " I'm very reluctant to say, 'we can do it better than a public school can do it,'" said one staffer. " We might be serving in a different way than a public school...we're in a different place." Many noted that faith-based institutions cannot be expected to replace public institutions:

> I'm proud that the faith-based initiatives in communities are finally getting the recognition that they haven't had. The concern that I have is that governmental responsibility will be compromised. I think the citizens have the right for the government to serve them, and to short-change that is not a good idea.

At the same time, everyone agreed that any support is better than none. They believe that they do good despite their limitations, and they believe that they can do more good with more resources.

Although it is hard to generalize about their attitudes, it seems safe to say that they would all agree with the site leader who said flatly that " poverty is not a matter of faith." Faith, and the support of faith-based (and other) institutions, can help individuals overcome the barriers of poverty, but changing the condition itself is another question entirely. YET staff seemed confident that they could help their children, but not that they could change their communities.

The Role and Expression of Faith

The question of faith brings us back to the question of site diversity. Faith's role and expression in a given institution depends on the institution and its spiritual vision, and that vision is literally as varied as the definition of faith itself.

P/PV significantly restricted the expressions of religion during YET Center class time. We asked sites not to use class time to preach, pray or proselytize. We provided most reading materials ourselves, instructed YET sites to refrain from open expressions of religion in class, defined strictly what was to happen during class time and controlled everything through classroom visits.

But we did not eliminate religious content. The various sites all have a religious or spiritual mission that expresses itself in the daily life of the site and that found its way into YET classes as well. Faith played a role even when not explicitly expressed.

In the daily life of a given site, religion can play an overt or an unspoken role. Some Protestant sites consider the Scriptures and the teachings of the New Testament to be central to everything they do, and expressions of those beliefs are everywhere in the site, posted on the walls or spoken by the staff. "Everyone is supposed to be using Scripture wherever possible, and as far as I'm concerned, it's possible everywhere," said one leader at a Baptist site. "We look for the Christian themes in all of our curriculum." A teacher at a similar site put it this way, "Everything is done through the Word. And everything that we do comes back to the Word."

Catholic sites tended to expect their students to understand the Catholic point of view and to abide by an established code of behavior, whose basis was ultimately spiritual. "The religious component carries across nearly everything...it's kind of there all the time, and it's hard to separate it out," said one Catholic school staffer. "Concern, compassion, the dignity of every person," said another. "That's the foundation of everything we do."

Still other sites work with a religious vision that allows them to focus on the practical. One Presbyterian put it this way, "You can't start talking about someone's soul until you've fed their belly and put clothes on their back," he explained. Our Jewish partners expressed a similar faith in practical works: "Giving kids an opportunity to develop their literacy skills is like saving a life," said one. "It's about developing human beings and developing character and self-esteem. And that's all part of what I think that Jewish values are all about."

The expressions of faith in YET sites are so varied as to include value systems that transcend any particular religion. One site seeks to impart a non-denominational kind of spirituality:

> What I see as the spiritual basis of [this organization's] mission has to do with our belief in the dignity of each individual, and in our belief that everyone has a right to things like education, health care, affordable housing, community...[it is], in a sense, our responsibility to provide that or help people find that. You could argue about how religious it is. To be honest, for me, it's not. We're not a church. I'm not here because I'm a sister. So I think if you look at that as spiritual, then yes, it informs the way we design our programs.

All this brings us back to the original point, which is that the term "faith-based institution" embraces a highly diverse set of beliefs and practical applications of belief. YET sites range from those that overtly promote the religious beliefs of a particular denomination to those that consider themselves spiritually motivated but not sectarian. In this, they clearly reflect America's diverse religious practices.

But how did these faiths play out in the classroom? How did they manifest in the working day of the YET Centers? The answers vary. In some of our YET classrooms, a visitor will see no indication of religion whatsoever. Other sites feature prominent crucifixes, inspirational Biblical messages and religious pamphlets. Some teachers discuss "the Word" during reading sessions. Some staff pray with their students before or after YET class time (but not during, as per P/PV's instructions). Others consciously work to impress YET students with core values and behavioral lessons without necessarily discussing a particular religious belief.

As far as we know, sites have not used YET Center time to actively proselytize to their students, but every site is informed by a set of spiritual and social values that find expression in the YET classrooms, even if only by virtue of the YET Center being knit into the overall fabric of the institution itself.

As noted above, P/PV staff worked from the beginning to restrict the expression of religion in the classroom, and sites have adhered to our restrictions, neither always happily nor always reluctantly. When we asked a site not to pray for 10 minutes during class, they stopped. When we asked a site to use our materials and not Bible stories for reading sessions, they complied. They did not always like it, but they accommodated it, and when asked about it, they usually said that they could understand our point of view.

Nonetheless, when asked if they would like more freedom than they were given, virtually everyone said that they would and that they would shape the curriculum to better reflect the beliefs of the site if they could. "You cannot take away the elements that help us," said one pastor. "I have to be true to what I am. Secular- that's not what I am." Another said, "I want to be able to do what I want to do. I want God to have His way when I walk back in there." A Baptist staffer said:

> I'd like to see [the curriculum] changed. With our teachers, and it should be all of us in the faith-based initiative, we already know the Word. We abide and live by it, and therefore we know how to adapt the curriculum to the Word. For those who do not, and it's kind of fresh and new to them, I'd like to see the curriculum written on a more religious basis.

This attitude was not unique to the more overtly religious sites; every site wants to share its values. An early, revealing conflict with some of our Catholic sites involved P/PV's concept of an interactive YET classroom, in which children could speak up at will and sit where they pleased. This concept, it emerged, conflicted with the Catholic school's notion that control and restraint are spiritual values that they need to foster. One sister put it this way:

> In our system, we talk about discipline in terms of behavior and conduct, but it stems from a desire to build self-discipline, in terms of a spiritual value. [P/PV staff] were talking about, why does a child have to raise his or her hand, or why can't they sit anywhere?

> That's all well and good, but it's not who we are. And it's not who our children are, or the children that we are attempting to form. [P/PV] really had no idea that for us, that was really treading on a piece of our identity.

Site staffers were often confused by our attempt to fund faith-based sites without funding their faith. As noted above, they understand the program guidelines, the need for outcomes and the concentration on literacy as opposed to simple relationship building. What they did not always understand is why an agency like ours would want to partner with faith-based organizations without taking full advantage of what they believed their religion had to offer. One site leader put it this way:

> I'm still really confused. When you say something is faith-based, it has to be real clear if you don't intend to have any faith in there. I mean, it's faith-based as opposed to bar-based. They could take [YET] to a bar, and what's the difference? You could take it to a casino. What is the faith component? If it's to be excluded, people need to know that up front.

Other site leaders felt the same discomfort. " I felt offended, actually," said one. " At the preliminary meetings, the thrust was, 'We don't want to lose [the faith element], it's faith based, we feel that that's the thing that has made it successful, capitalize on that.' And then all of a sudden, it was, 'Don't do this, don't do that.' I thought that was a very strange component for a faith-based model." More than one pointed out that if P/PV wanted to treat sites simply as " buildings" that we would lose what they considered a vital strength. " For P/PV to say, 'let's ignore [the religion], and deal with the building, we're going to rent the space,' I don't think it's healthy," said one leader. " If P/PV celebrates what we are, then we start at a whole other level. But if you reduce us to a building, you don't have anything but a building."

These kinds of comments help to clarify something important: in most sites, service and faith tend to be woven together into a single fabric. That fabric may be overtly religious or only subtly spiritual, but it is of a piece nonetheless, and the sites are not inclined to unravel it. Perhaps nothing better illustrates the mixture than this story, told by an organizer who worked with several sites:

> There was a little boy who was going to be kicked out of school, so they sent him to [his YET teacher], and she basically told him, "Jesus loves you, and He sent me here to tell you that He loves you, and there's a good little boy in there that I'm going to help you bring out, and I just want you to know that wherever you go, Jesus loves you and I love you." And that was outside of the literacy program, but he was in her literacy program, and he made the honor roll.

How does that child now connect Jesus and success? Did the reading program reinforce the religion? Would the reading program work without the religion or without the teacher's love for her student? Can the teacher ever express that love without expressing that faith? In the end, it would appear that separating the faith and the love and the service would be virtually impossible. When asked about dealing with P/PV's restrictions, that teacher said that she understood them, but added simply, " I have to be me."

Conclusion:
The Mission Shapes the Decisions

If the YET experience so far can be boiled down to a single finding, it is this: the question for funders is not what faith-based sites can or cannot do. The question is, what does the funder want to do?

Returning to the original military metaphor is helpful. When an army officer looks at his rank and file, he does not immediately ask, who are these people? How much capacity do they have? What do they want? What's their mission?

Instead, the officer asks, what is my mission? Am I storming a hill? Swimming a channel? Building a bridge? The commander identifies the mission, and selects and trains troops accordingly. The capacity of the army does not define the mission; the needs of the mission define the work that the army must do to establish the necessary capacity.

So when considering increased support for America's "armies of compassion," whether with public funds or private funds, it seems logical to ask, what is the mission we want to help this army execute? In the case of YET Centers, P/PV established a clear mission for itself: we wanted to teach children to read, using an effective method that could work in almost any faith-based site. We wanted any child who walked into any YET Center to have an equal chance of getting a quality service. All decisions that followed concerning the program were made with that mission in mind.

Thus, what it boiled down to with the YET Center was the same question funders must struggle with all the time, whether they are working with faith-based or secular sites: What do we want, consistency or diversity? P/PV could reasonably have chosen to help sites develop programs that addressed their own self-defined goals. Instead, we chose to promote consistent programming across a diverse group of sites. In doing so, we discovered that faith-based institutions have a variable, but nonetheless significant, ability to execute a quality reading program for children.

But what about the hot-button issues? Do faith-based institutions have more of a right than any other institution to do things their own way? Are their

home-grown methodologies inherently better? Much of the rhetoric around the faith-based movement tangles with questions like these, and they are indeed easy to get tangled in. All that we can say for sure is that a given funder has the right to define what grantees can and cannot do with its money.

And here, critically, is where the implications of the YET experience are different for private and public funders. A private funder can allow sites as much flexibility as it chooses because it is under no obligation to place limits on their expressions of faith in the program. A public funder does not share this freedom and must work within whatever guidelines Congress and the courts establish.

Sites are not necessarily opposed to such guidelines, but it is safe to say that absent any restrictions, they will likely express their faith in a given program just as they do elsewhere in their site's daily operations. Both public and private funders should assume that unless they dictate otherwise, religion will play as great or as small a role as the site staff themselves want it to.

It all comes back to the mission, and how the funders define, limit and assist with its execution. Faith-based institutions can and will do any number of things. They can be found in the hearts of the poorest communities. They have access to volunteers and community support. They are out there, in significant numbers, seeking to "do good" as they define it, and many are willing to work with funders to do so within set guidelines. Collectively, their potential is probably unlimited. What can be limited is what their funders ask them to do.

Moving Ahead: Next Steps and Final Thoughts

P/PV has learned a great deal from its faith-based partners, and we are working to improve our YET Center project. We have adjusted some of our practices as we integrate 10 new YET Centers, clarifying our communications, raising target retention numbers, refining the classroom model, stepping up our efforts to recruit volunteers and adding classroom assistants. Improved flexibility in some areas and improved structure in others will help us do this, at scale, while accommodating the particular needs each site brings to the table.

We are now better prepared to approach future missions, armed as we are with an improved understanding of faith-based projects in general. Any funder who approaches a faith-based project would do well to answer the following questions:

- What is our mission? All decisions concerning site independence, the role of the funder, the role of site staff, the important outcome measures and the role of faith depend on the overall mission of the project. It is critical for funders, public or private, to know what their mission is and make sure that the sites know it too, so that they can self-select in or out with "eyes wide open." Is the mission to run a specific program? To support a particular faith? To allow sites to develop or refine their own approaches? Or to teach them to implement a particular approach or achieve a specific outcome?
- What is our position on religion? Can we tolerate any amount, a limited amount or none at all? Are we ready to communicate our limits to our sites? Or will we support faith without limitation? Sites routinely told us that they can work with restrictions; they ask only to know what they are.
- What is more important: consistent outcomes across a group of sites or independent growth in individual sites? Which is our priority, delivering specific services or generally supporting institutions? Are we willing to exercise the authority necessary to get consistency? Are we willing to tolerate the diversity of outcomes that come with independent approaches? It is safe to say that in any case in which flexibility is allowed, the result will be diverse (and variably spiritual) approaches. And anywhere that rigor is demanded, the results can be fairly consistent – if the rigor is rewarded and if the proper tools for execution are available.

Interestingly, the answers to these questions will reveal something about the funder's own values. YET Centers, for example, were shaped by the subjective values of P/PV and the staff who developed the YET Center model: we value effective service to individuals, so we sought a literacy model that could guarantee positive outcomes for children. We value consistency, so we implemented a plan with the goal of overcoming the problems posed by site diversity. We value religious tolerance and diversity, so we sought a

program model that could serve Catholics, Protestants, Jews, Muslims and independent or non-denominational sites of any kind. And we value utility, so we sought a model in which religious expression was restricted enough to prove useful to public and private funders alike.

And while these questions may be sensitive, the funder that does not address them could well find itself wandering in that dangerous part of the road, the middle, delivering a confusing message to religious organizations that says on the one hand, " We want to help you do what you already do," and on the other, " We want you to do what we think you should do." Our sites said repeatedly that they did not mind working within our guidelines but that they needed to know exactly what the guidelines were.

After all, what is clear at this stage is that if one chooses to " rally the armies of compassion," then one takes on the responsibilities of a leader. Armies are not judged by the effectiveness of their soldiers. They are judged by the effectiveness of their leaders. Our experience with YET Centers suggests that it is indeed possible to muster recruits, assemble them into a division and march them in some formation toward a common goal. Like soldiers, our sites know that they are giving up some independence but also that they are getting something in return that they could not have achieved on their own. And like officers, P/PV staff know that they must deal responsibly with the abilities and limitations of the YET sites.

Much of the discussion of faith-based initiatives has so far centered on what they can, cannot, will or will not do. But P/PV's experience suggests that they can and will do any number of things, and they can and will continue to do any number of things. It is up to funders to establish their own goals and values, and recruit and direct accordingly.

Endnotes

1 Cnaan, Ram A., *Keeping Faith in the City: How 401 Urban Religious Congregations Serve Their Neediest Neighbors*. Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania, 2000.

2 Almost 50 percent (47.7%) of children in Philadelphia public schools are not reading at grade level (Philadelphia Coalition for Kids, 2001).

3 All components of the YET program are grounded in research: the strong relationship between oral language/vocabulary activities and reading (Hart and Risley, 1995), the value of student writing (National Research Center on English Learning and Achievement, 1998), emphasis on daily reading (Terrance, 1998), the importance of reading to children (National Research Council, 1998), teacher assessment (U.S. Department of Education, 1998), the use of trained volunteers (Wasik, 1998) and the need for ongoing professional development (Morris et al., 1990).

4 A few YET Centers begin their YET program during the last period of the school day and continue it into the after-school hours.

5 Hileman, Jane. Available at www.100bookchallenge.com. 1996.

6 The Informal Reading Inventory (IRI) is an individually administered reading test composed of a series of graded word lists and passages used to determine decoding and comprehension skills. Five types of comprehension questions follow each passage: topic, fact, inference, evaluation and vocabulary. IRI results will help support the daily instructional decisions teachers need to make (Farr, 1992; Johns, 1996).

7 As of Fall 2001, another 10 YET centers have been launched in sites that include all of the faiths above, as well as an Islamic site. Their data and experiences are not considered in this report.

8 For more details on students' relationships to the sites, see Part II: Recruitment.

9 Data in this section were primarily collected by YET Center staff completing forms developed by P/PV. For more information, see the Appendix. Some information, such as a participant's pre-existing relationship to the faith-based organization, was gathered through interviews with site staff.

10 Of the three sites that did not run for the entire school year, one met its enrollment goal, whereas the other two did not.

11 Twenty-three Centers ran the YET program at some point during the 2000-2001 school year. One program dropped out of the demonstration after the first half of the year. One program began in April and ran to the end of the school year.

12 This percentage does not include information from the participants in the one out-of-school program.

13 The following information is based on teacher assessment reports of 421 YET Center participants.

14 Broken down, the percentages for attendance look like this: 0 classes attended, 7 percent; 1 to 20, 22 percent; 21 to 40, 15 percent; 41 to 60, 10 percent; 61 to 80, 9 percent; 81 to 100, 8 percent; 101 to 120, 11 percent; 121 to 140, 13 percent; 141+, 6 percent.

15 Trulear, Harold Dean, *Faith-Based Institutions and High-Risk Youth: First Report to the Field*. Philadelphia: Public/Private Ventures, 2000.

16 The following data are based on the test scores of the 392 youth who took two IRI tests at least 90 calendar days apart, and thus may represent conservative estimates of participants' reading growth. Students participating in the program for a full academic year would likely show greater growth.

17 This does not include the preschool children served by one program.

18 This does not include the "out-of-school" youth served by one program, who initially read 8.1 years below grade level and gained an average of one grade level. Some of those students were as old as 24, and only seven were tested a second time after 90 days.

19 b=.005, p=.0435.

20 In several cases where sites could not find suitable teachers, P/PV itself recruited teachers on the sites' behalf. Sometimes P/PV staff ended up directly supervising them, left largely alone to do so by site administrators.

21 P/PV has had to add staff as the YET program has progressed. Whereas we started with one supervisor and a team of interns working with site staff, YET now has two full-time employees, assisted not only by P/PV's own support staff and interns but also by two part-time field workers that monitor program implementation. This is in addition to site-based supervisors, some of whom work with their own sites and others of whom work with collaboratives of sites.

22 One model for such organization is P/PV's church-based mentoring program, Amachi, which recruits volunteer mentors from churches. Amachi relies on the cooperation of pastors, who help recruit volunteers and paid church-based staffers to help organize and maintain interest among recruits. Amachi has successfully recruited more than 500 volunteer mentors in six months.

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Appendix:
Data Collection

In order to evaluate the progress of children, P/PV requires that staff test participants' reading levels at entry, midway through the year and at the end of the year. Testing is done using an Informal Reading Inventory (IRI), a standardized instrument individually administered, which allows YET staff to establish students' baseline reading levels, start them working at the appropriate level and monitor their development. At the same time, IRIs allow P/PV to monitor the overall performance of a Center by examining the progress of its students.

YET Centers are also required to complete applicant intake forms for each participating youth. These forms provide data about program participants and contain questions about the youth's schooling, home environment, reading frequency, attitude toward and interest in reading, as well as background characteristics, parent or guardian demographics and attitudes toward reading. YET Center staff must also obtain parental and youth permission to participate in P/PV's study. Throughout the program, Centers are asked to record and report daily program attendance. Finally, teacher assessment forms were received from 421 of the 786 YET Center participants. Table A-1 shows response rates for the IRI and intake forms for the 2000-2001 school-year program. During the course of the study, Centers submitted attendance forms more than 90 percent of the time.

P/PV generates a monthly attendance report and a biannual document that reports on enrollment, participation and reading progress across the entire group of YET Center sites.

Table A-1

Completion of Informal Reading Inventory (IRI) and Intake Forms

	Number of School-Year Students	Percentage of All School-Year Students
IRIs		
Students with at least one IRI score.	624	79%
Students with only one IRI score.	191	24%
Students with two IRI scores at least three months apart.	393	50%
Students with two IRI scores less than three months apart.	40	5%
Intake Form		
Students with completed intake forms.	513	65%
Intake Form and IRI		
Students with completed intake forms and at least one IRI score.	484	62%

Youth Education for Tomorrow (YET) Centers
October 2001

The Gesu School
1700 West Thompson Street
Philadelphia, PA 19121
215-763-3660

Little Flower High School
1000 West Lycoming Street
Philadelphia, PA 19140
215-455-6900

Philadelphia Mennonite High School
860 North 24th Street
Philadelphia, PA 19130
215-769-5363

St. Thomas Aquinas School
17th and Morris Streets
Philadelphia, PA 19145
215-334-0878

St. Vincent's Inn Dwelling at St. Martin de Porres School
44 West Logan Street
Philadelphia, PA 19144
215-438-2195

Urban Bridges at St. Gabriel's/Cooke Middle School
101 East Roosevelt Boulevard
Philadelphia, PA 19120
215-329-2530

Jewish Community Relations Council
2100 Arch Street
Philadelphia, PA 19103
215-832-0663

Congregation Rodeph Shalom*
615 North Broad Street
Philadelphia, PA 19123
215-627-1461

Kearney School
6th and Fairmont Avenue
Philadelphia, PA 19123
215-351-7343

Project H.O.M.E.
1515 Fairmount Avenue
Philadelphia, PA 19130
215-232-7272

Diamond Street
2829 Diamond Street
Philadelphia, PA 19121
215-235-0373

St. Elizabeth's Community Center/Lower Grades
1845 North 23rd Street
Philadelphia, PA 19121
215-235-3110

St. Elizabeth's Community Center/Teen Program*
1845 North 23rd Street
Philadelphia, PA 19121
215-235-3110

St. Elizabeth's School
1801 North 23rd Street
Philadelphia, PA 19121
215-235-3110

To Our Children's Future With Health, Inc.
1914 63rd Street
Philadelphia, PA 19151
215-879-7740

Anti-Drug & Alcohol Crusaders
52 North 52nd Street
Philadelphia, PA 19139
215-748-8727

Calvin Presbyterian Church
1401 North 60th Street
Philadelphia, PA 19151
215-877-7711

Cathedral of Praise
6400 Haverford Avenue
Philadelphia, PA 19131
215-474-2680

Christian Stronghold Baptist Church
4701 Lancaster Avenue
Philadelphia, PA 19131
215-878-6331

Holy Temple of The Lord and Savior Jesus Christ
5116 Market Street
Philadelphia, PA 19139
215-474-7656

Nueva Esperanza Academy
301 West Hunting Park Avenue
Philadelphia, PA 19140
215-457-3667

Beulah Baptist Christian Day School*
5001-21 Spruce Street
Philadelphia, PA 19139
215-747-3347

Greater Exodus Baptist Church*
704-714 North Broad Street
Philadelphia, PA 19130
215-235-1394

Impacting Your World Christian Center*
5515 Germantown Avenue
Philadelphia, PA 19335
215-438-7838

Mt. Carmel Baptist Church*
5732 Race Street
Philadelphia, PA 19139
215-476-5320

New Hope Temple Baptist Church/Jackson School*
711 South 12th Street
Philadelphia, PA 19147
215-922-6691

Our Lady of Angels*
2916 Dickinson Street
Philadelphia, PA 19146
215-468-7230

St. Malachy School*
1419 North 11th Street
Philadelphia, PA 19122
215-232-0696

St. Maria Goretti High School*
1736 South 10th Street
Philadelphia, PA 19148
215-465-8437

Universal Institute Charter School*
15th and Catherine Streets
Philadelphia, PA 19146
215-732-2876

Visitation Catholic School*
300 East Lehigh Avenue
Philadelphia, PA 19125
215-634-7280

Ward A.M.E. Church*
728 North 43rd Street
Philadelphia, PA 19104
215-222-7992

* YET Center not in operation when data were collected for this report.

P/PV

Public/Private Ventures
[illegible]

February 2002

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